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## BOOK NOTICES

**They Do Not Die.** By Charles A. Hall. New York: Macmillan, 1918. Pp. xii+133. \$1.50.

This is not a book that attempts a proof of personal immortality in any usual way; it consists of a series of affirmations which seem to the writer not only reasonable but imperative. A single quotation will show the method and quality of the reasoning:

"In the spiritual world there are all sorts and conditions of men and women who have passed on from earth, and whose sympathies have become more exquisite, and among them there must be many who concern themselves with the constant stream of new arrivals, making their entrance into spirit-life easy and pleasant. Each spirit undergoing the great transition will become evident to these spiritual ministrants; they will see nothing of the laboured breathing and bodily decay that distress the watchers on this side, because they have no material sense by which they can become aware of them: all they will recognize is the real man, the spirit, growing into consciousness of the spiritual world, and they will rejoice at his safe arrival. They, too, will give instruction to the newly arrived, and care for him until he is prepared to go his own way."

This is the burden of the book. The writer seems to be perfectly sure of his ground. To those who are able to share his confidence the volume will bring comfort, for it is affirmative, specific, and hopeful.

**Concerning Prayer: Its Nature, Its Difficulties, and Its Value.** By various authors. New York: Macmillan, 1916. Pp. xiii+504. \$3.00.

"In this volume a lady, three laymen, two parish clergymen, two clerical dons—all Anglicans—a Wesleyan theological tutor, a Congregational minister, and an American professor belonging to the Society of Friends, put forward some thoughts which are the result of a sustained corporate effort to clear up their own ideas on this important matter." The result is one of the most complete modern treatments of prayer, not sustained at a uniform level of clarity or force, as would be inevitable under the circumstances, but altogether earnest and worthy the subject. Of the fourteen chapters in the discussion we note three as peculiarly valuable: "Prayer and the Mystic Vision," by Rufus M. Jones; "Prayer and Bodily Health," by Harold Anson; "Prayer for the Dead," by the author of *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*. Professor Jones

discusses the mystic vision with the insight and skill of which he is master. "Eternity has in some sort been set in our nature and we can no more shut the infinite out of our being than the inlet can shut out the tides of the sea." "We are framed and made for intercourse with a supersensuous world and we cannot live within the limits of the tangible and describable world." Now prayer is essentially immediate correspondence and fellowship with this infinite and eternal; and mystic vision is identified with the central act of prayer. Harold Anson defends the proposition that "the Church is called upon to discover and practice the method [of Christian healing] used by Christ, which is founded upon a rational and discoverable basis." He feels that the best psychotherapists have discovered the main outlines of this rational basis and that the Christian churches ought to welcome their research and, under carefully guarded conditions, their practice. At the same time he does not accept either the theories or the practice of Christian Science. Discussing prayer for the dead, the author defends the practice on the grounds that it is a natural instinct for us to desire the highest welfare of our beloved dead and we have not only the right but the duty to lay all our wants before God. Direct prayer to God for departed souls is a normal part of the true religious life.

**The Church and the Great War.** By Worth Marion Tippy. New York: Revell, 1918. Pp. 139. \$1.00.

Dr. Tippy is executive secretary of the Commission on the Church and Social Service of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. He has gathered in eighteen chapters a report of what the churches in the United States did in a practical way to help win the Great War. There are two chapters in the book which will arouse debate; they are concerned with the "Conscientious Objector" and the "Fellowship of Reconciliation." In dealing with the conscientious objectors Dr. Tippy says, "On the whole the policy of the Administration has been just and prudent, and its fruits are now revealed in a united country." In the light of such an article as "Disciplinary Barracks" by Evan Thomas in the *Survey* for February 1, 1919, this statement needs further consideration. The chapter on "Economic and Political Reconstruction" is especially significant in view of the recent declaration of the Methodist church of Canada. This is a preliminary report of the work of the churches in war time, not wholly unprejudiced and requiring still further study.